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breed of newspapers

Baltimore has its share of the hundreds of over and underground newcomers to news business

An underground newspaper is:

1. A newspaper that is anti-Establishment.
2. A newspaper that subscribes to the Liberation News Service or another underground news service.
3. A private, individual publishing enterprise.
4. A newspaper that uses four-letter words as frequently as most newspapers use conjunctions.
5. A newspaper on the radical left.
6. A newspaper that calls policemen pigs.
7. A newspaper that seeks to appeal to the young, particularly the intelligent and radical young, in a way that ordinary newspapers do not.
8. A newspaper that doesn't pretend to be objective in its coverage of events.
9. All of the above.
10. None of the above.

Whichever you pick, you are partly, not wholly right. All the answers describe some underground newspapers, none describes them all and none describes any underground newspaper accurately; for they are as various in their outlook, philosophy and coverage as they are in their geographic distribution.

There are hundreds of them in the country, promoting every cause from violent revolution to poetry readings in sylvan glades, and about the only things they seem to have in common is that they are put out by young people, and they are not underground either in the literal or the figurative sense. They are to be found, many times, in quite respectable stores (though sometimes not, as we will discover soon), and most of them have at least a telephone number where their staff members can be reached—even if they won't talk to you once you reach them.

In fact, some underground newspapers are so little underground that they represent the title being applied to them at all. It hurts their efforts to get advertis-

ing, they say, and their efforts to get a place on the newsstands of some local stores.

One store owner that I took *The Paper* to, said Larry Singer, editor of this little cultural journal that couldn't be more respectable, "took one look at the thing and told me to get it out of his place he wouldn't have anything to do with it."

"One thing was the fact that it's tabloid, which says underground to many people. Then the issue I took him happened to have on the cover a drawing of the Baltimore skyline in which the buildings were pictured sitting in a trash can. The point of the whole issue was that is what most people think of Baltimore and it's not true. I begged the guy to just open up the paper and look at any article to see what it was all about, but he refused."

The Paper is hardly what could be called underground, so let's get it established at the beginning that this is an article about the little paper in Baltimore (with a spill-over into Washington) put out by the young for—anyone, but primarily the young.

The oldest established little newspaper in Baltimore is *Harry*, begun late last year (Baltimore was late getting into the movement) by a group of students and some newspapermen for the purpose of "giving Baltimore an alternative" to the Establishment press, and serving the radical community which feels the regular press doesn't give it the news it wants to read the way it wants to read it.

WHY Harry? An ingenious name that has connotations of hairy and harass, was it something thought up at great expense of brainpower in an exhausting think session? Well, no. There was this exhaustive think session and nobody could think of a name and then one guy's little kid of about three wandered in and somebody said "Josh, what should we name our paper?" and Josh said "Harry."

Like many underground papers *Harry* is radical in outlook, deals freely in four-letter words, mistrusts all police and all

governments, carries classified ads from people asking for heterosexual or homosexual living arrangements, subscribes to Liberation News Service (which syndicates radical news from all over the country).

But unlike many other underground newspapers, according to its editor Michael Carliner, "*Harry* is not really all that political. We exist to give the other community in Baltimore another source of news, but we are not Marxist or anarchist like some other papers."

P. J. O'Rourke, one of the paper's leading lights, puts it this way: "We are part of the culture revolution rather than the political revolution. What is the difference? Well, that's a good question, because there really isn't much difference. It's that some people believe in armed struggle now and others believe in armed struggle later."

The *Harry* point of view can be seen, in part, in a paragraph by Mr. O'Rourke in a recent issue. "If things break down, as they seem apt to do in America, then you'll have to use focused and careful force to demonstrate your point. Make the police afraid to leave a squad car untended. Do this by politely but firmly fire-bombing their car every time they do—Make these attacks strictly hit and run. Avoid siege or vengeance mentalities. Forcing yourself completely underground is of marginal worth at the moment, note recent Panther behavior. You're not (usually) fighting evil men; you're fighting an evil system, an evil politic."

If this paragraph seems appalling, think of this: the *Harry* writer takes the trouble to say "If things break down," he calls police and not pigs; he reminds that "you're not fighting evil men;" all of which separates *Harry* from the more revolutionary underground papers.

But how long *Harry* will stay separated, in the light of Kent State and Jackson State and other occurrences that the *Harry* people see as the growing violence and repression in the United States, is anybody's guess. "A couple of years ago we thought we could convert everyone with love and flowers," says Mr. O'Rourke. "We thought we could turn on America. It was naive, but fun. What we didn't realize was how acutely GM